

Project Background

Nationally, Main Street communities have generated over \$16 billion dollars in public and private reinvestment and have spawned over 200,000 new jobs in downtown and neighborhood business districts. The Main Street approach is recognized throughout the U.S. as an effective tool for downtown economic development.

Starting with Madison in 1977, more than 160 Indiana communities have benefited from the Main Street program. Yet, there is much more to be done. At the March 2002 Indiana Main Street Council retreat, board members decided they needed to examine the needs of downtown revitalization programs to enable Indiana Main Street to continue effectively serving communities.

In May of 2002, Indiana Main Street selected Strategic Development Group, Inc. (SDG) of Bloomington to conduct a needs assessment of Indiana Main Street programs.

Geared toward identifying downtown revitalization needs, the assessment surveyed the current programs and training needs of 165 Indiana communities. Main Street programs in 102 communities completed surveys, giving the assessment a 62 percent response rate. Appendix A contains a copy of the survey and results.

This report includes a discussion of the economic trends affecting Indiana's downtowns, a demographic snapshot of Indiana Main Street communities, the summary of survey results, recommendations for the Indiana Main Street coordinating program, and detailed demographic profiles for each Main Street community.

2001 National Reinvestment Statistics

National Main Street Center

- Amount of public and private reinvestment in Main Street communities since 1980..... \$16.1 billion
- Number of net new businesses generated since 1980.....56,300
- Number of net new jobs generated since 1980..... 226,900
- Number of building rehabilitations since 1980.....88,700

Top Five Trends on Main Street 1999 Main Street Census

- Local government reinvesting or relocating in downtown..... 36%
- Local businesses and government consider historic preservation a positive benefit 35%
- Large discounters negatively affecting local business 25%
- Location-neutral businesses opening in downtown .. 19%
- Bypasses developed around downtown..... 17%